

07/27/2007

Dear Friend:

As Congress crafts a balanced policy addressing the many important energy issues facing our country this week we must consider the benefits of renewable energy.

That's why during the bill's debate I am planning to introduce an amendment to create a federal Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), also known as a Renewable Electricity Standard (RES), to ensure that some of America's electricity needs are met using wind, solar and other renewable energy sources.

My proposal relies on a market-based enforcement mechanism that harnesses America's capacity for innovation and puts it to work solving two of the nation's biggest challenges: our dependence on nonrenewable energy sources and the threat posed by global warming.

A Renewable Electricity Standard makes good economic sense. My proposal would provide \$72.6 billion in new capital investments, \$15 billion in property tax revenues, and more than \$17 billion in payments to farmers, ranchers, and rural landowners. It would produce more than 355,000 new jobs, many of them in states like New Mexico, with abundant wind and sun. The CEO of GE Energy recently testified that "wind and solar energy are likely to be among the largest sources of new manufacturing jobs worldwide during the 21st Century."

My plan would also cut global warming pollution by an amount equivalent to taking nearly 71 million cars off the road. That's a significant change, but this bold step will not come at the expense of American consumers. Some estimates have predicted that an RES will not increase utility prices. In fact, estimates predict that a 20 percent renewable standard would save consumers over \$12.6 billion per year. Industrial consumers would save \$17.4 billion, and commercial consumers would save \$19.1 billion. Over twenty states have already passed Renewable Electricity Standards, including New Mexico, and nine of these states have already increased or accelerated existing standards.

My bipartisan proposal has 150 cosponsors from every region of the country. It enjoys overwhelming popular support, and I am working with business leaders, environmental groups, and labor organizations to build the largest possible coalition for this important change.

Inaction is not an option. The Department of Energy projects that America's demand for electricity will increase roughly 30 percent by 2030. Today our nation has no long-term policy to spur our use of renewable resources while we strive to meet this projected increase in electricity demand. We must act now to avoid economic and environmental disaster.

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. Please feel free to contact me with concerns about any federal issue. You may also visit my website at www.tomudall.house.gov for more information.

Very Truly Yours,

Tom Udall
Member of Congress